

# NAFA Raptor & Falconry Small Grants Program Request for Proposals 2026

The [North American Falconers Association](#) (NAFA) Raptor & Falconry Small Grants Program (RFSGP) stimulates innovative science, outreach, and scholarly activities for the North American falconry community that specifically support raptor conservation, the falconry tradition, and falconers. Proposals from falconers, raptor enthusiasts, citizen scientists, archivists, falconry clubs, graduate students, and academic scientists are encouraged and welcome.

All proposals must show a clear means of making an impact on one or more of four themes: (1) **conservation** of raptors and prey, and the habitat they require; (2) **preservation** of the traditions and heritage of falconry; (3) **communication** and/or (4) **education** activities that perpetuate the legal practice falconry and its cultural and natural resources.

We value projects with the potential to cross themes and are especially interested in proposals that incorporate sound science or a scholarly approach. We prioritize proposals that advance knowledge of raptors, the understanding of falconry, and support falconers in their roles as raptor advocates through community leadership and environmental stewardship.

The NAFA RFSGP does not fund construction of flight chambers, molting or weathering mews. Requests for materials to construct nest boxes and platforms will be considered provided such construction is not the sole focus of the proposal, and where such materials cannot be funded locally (local sponsors, e.g., state hawking club or nature center are encouraged).

Requests for up to \$4,000 will be entertained. Total funding for the RFSGP available on a calendar year is typically \$10,000 with financial support made possible by equal contributions from NAFA and the Falconry Fund's Presidents Grant. Successful proposals shall receive half of their funding from the NAFA RFSGP and half from the FF Presidents Grant. Value will be given to proposals that show in-kind and/or cash contributions including time-investment on behalf of applicants.

2026 Program Timetable

June 1	Request for proposals issued
August 30	Proposals due
September 1 to November 1	Proposals review period
Nov 20-Dec 10	Applicants notified at NAFA annual field meet
December 31	Projects can start as of 12/31/2026

Requests for **Rapid Response Funds** up to \$4,000 are entertained year-round for time sensitive projects that may be critical to support any of the four themes outlined above. Projects of an urgent nature could take the form of scientific inquiry or work that engages people to help preserve our North American falconry culture and tradition. Awards for Rapid Response Funds are dependent upon available funding and may not be matched by the Falconry Fund.

For each theme outlined below, we have provided examples of the broad range of subjects that are eligible. Proponents are not limited to these examples and are encouraged to submit proposals addressing any of the designated themes.

## **Theme 1: Conservation of raptors and prey, and the habitat they require**

### Citizen Science

- Project based on falconer observations

- Project focused on local or practical raptor or falconry knowledge

#### Conservation

- Natural history research
- Human-raptor interactions
- Population modeling
- Raptor behavior
- Rehabilitation
- Reintroduction

#### Raptor Husbandry

- Veterinary science - disease investigation, preventative medicine (e.g., vaccines)
- Husbandry and captive management
- Captive breeding

#### Protection of Falconry Landscapes

- Falconers can lead local efforts to preserve prairies, key raptor nesting sites, habitat restoration, etc., that sustain the sport of falconry

### **Theme 2: Preservation of falconry heritage**

#### History and Traditions

- Historical evaluation or analysis
- Cross-cultural falconry text translations
- Relational database construction
- Documenting American innovations in falconry

#### Policy, law or regulation

- Reviews including projects that preserve falconry's legal status

### **Theme 3: Communication**

#### Convene a Meeting or Workshop

- Falconers as a catalyst for change—novel ideas that contribute to an understanding of conservation, management, or falconry traditions.

#### Documentation of falconry practices through media

- Film, photography
- Podcasting

### **Theme 4: Education**

- Documenting the cultural heritage of falconry
  - Formal curriculum and learning initiatives focused on raptors and/or falconry
  - Extension programs for non-formal education and learning
- Use of novel equipment or technology
  - Digitization of falconry books

### **Proposal Instructions**

All proposals must describe a clear path to impact and outline each step of the project. Importantly, describe how your project will move from the output to the outcomes and impact stages, and the role your partners might play in helping to achieve this.

The complete proposal must consist of a cover sheet, supporting information, and budget. Awards are generally made for projects up to 12 months' duration, though longer projects will be considered.

1. Provide a simple cover sheet (see specific details below).

2. Provide an abstract in non-technical language (maximum 300 words) of the proposed activity. This abstract may be used in whole or adapted by the FF for announcements and publicity material.
3. Provide supporting information. This must be a single **word document or .pdf file**, with 12-point font, single-spaced, with at least one-inch margins. Please see instructions below.
4. Provide a budget summary and itemized budget that are clearly linked to your proposal activities. RFSGP funding may be used for any reasonable and appropriate research expense. Support for postdocs, students, and technical staff is permitted. The maximum budget request is \$4,000.

Proposal format (5 pages maximum – excluding abstract, budget, timeline, and references)

- Cover sheet
  - Project Title
  - Contact information for the Principal Investigator(s): full name, title, address, phone, fax, e-mail address, institutional organization or affiliation (if any)
  - Brief statement of the project's relevance or application to falconry (i.e., how the proposal addresses one or more of the four themes)
  - Accounting: If the proposal is funded, to whom or to which organization would the check be made payable, and where should it be mailed? Provide account number information for direct deposit payment
- Background Information (summarize your research topic or project and its importance – explain what led you to this topic, including your prior experience and the timeliness and importance of the project)
- Purpose of proposed work (state the overarching challenge or research question that you will address)
- Objectives of the study or project (state the aims of the study)
- Methods (describe specific activities and how you will accomplish them)
- Expected Results or Products (describe specific outcomes anticipated and how information or products will be shared or disseminated and to whom; include a statement of reporting)
- Budget (prepare an itemized budget that clearly connects with project activities)
- Timeline (summary of activities in a calendar year, or longer, if appropriate)
- Literature Cited (references are desirable, and can be in the form of scientific reports or falconry lay publications including the NAFA journal, Hawk Chalk, Archives of Falconry resources, etc.)

### **Responsibilities**

Recipients of RFSGP and FF Presidents Grant funds will be required to:

1. **Submit** a final report. Reports should describe results and progress relating to each specific metric of success presented in the original proposal. Failure to submit a report within the annual funding cycle will result in disqualification for future NAFA RFSGP and FF Presidents Grant funding.
2. **Publish** a report or story detailing the results of the funded work in one of the NAFA publications, the Hawk Chalk or the annual Journal (repeat award winners must publish updates at least every other year for multi-year funding)

3. **Acknowledge** NAFA and the FF Presidents Grant in all presentations, reports, and publications stemming at least in part from this funding.
4. **Change of Scope:** If a grant is awarded to a candidate and the recipient of that grant encounters a material change in circumstances that changes the scope of the proposed project, the recipient must submit a written description to the NAFA board as soon as possible that includes, but is not limited to:
  - How the circumstances have changed and require a modification of the activities outlined in the original proposal
  - If the proposed project is still possible with the current funding
  - If the proposed project is not possible with the current funding, how the scope of the potential project has changed
  - How the currently allocated funds will be used in light of this revised scope

The revised project proposal will then be reviewed by the NAFA Conservation Committee, and a recommendation will be forwarded to the NAFA board. In the event that a modified proposal is rejected, the recipient of the grant will be required to return all funds to NAFA and FF, as appropriate.

### **Review Criteria**

All proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the NAFA Conservation Committee (and other appointed subject experts, as needed). Reviewers will have a broad range of expertise and background and will not necessarily be subject matter experts. Proposals should be written accordingly. The Conservation Committee will recommend funding levels to the NAFA board for approval.

For each category, reviewers will assign points as a way of rating how well this project meets the goals of the RFSGP. Where possible, reviewers will include comments to explain their ratings [such as calling attention to a particularly positive (or negative) feature of the proposal].

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. The impact the project is likely to make on one or more of the four themes that support falconry. The project exemplifies the positive role that falconers and falconry knowledge play in fostering raptor conservation, wildlife management, or preservation of the rich heritage of North American falconry traditions (30 points).
2. Project's goals and objectives are clear, congruent and achievable (20 points).
3. Plan is cost-effective with clear connection of activities with a budget request (15 points).
4. Expected immediate and long-term results are included in the proposal (15 points).
5. Project honors the mission of NAFA and the FF (10 points).
6. Project is innovative and makes good use of financial resources and/or in-kind match (10 points).

### **Scoring Key**

Based upon total average score from all reviewers, as follows:

90+	Highest priority 90-100, if funds are available
60-90	May need to request further information before authorizing funding
Below 60	Does not meet the stated goals of the RFSGP